

The Lord Accomplishes His Purposes

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 01 February 2026

Preacher: J.D. Edwards

[0 : 00] Our sermon passage is the entire chapter of 1 Samuel chapter 23.! So please turn to 1 Samuel chapter 23.! I'll read these 29 verses trusting that it's God's inspired, inerrant, infallible, clear, sufficient word.

It's God's very own word for you and me, his people. 1 Samuel chapter 23. Then they told David, saying, Look, the Philistines are fighting against Calah, and they are robbing the threshing floors. Therefore David inquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go and attack these Philistines? And the Lord said to David, Go and attack the Philistines and save Calah. But David's men said to him, Look, we are afraid here in Judah.

How much more if we go to Calah against the armies of the Philistines? Then David inquired of the Lord once again. And the Lord answered him and said, Arise, go down to Calah, for I will deliver the Philistines into your hand.

And David and his men went to Calah and fought with the Philistines, struck them with a mighty blow, and took away their livestock. So David saved the inhabitants of Calah.

[1 : 17] Now it happened when Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech, fled to David and Calah, that he went down with an ephod in his hand. And Saul was told that David had gone to Calah.

So Saul said, Go and deliver him into my hand, for he has shut himself in by entering a town that has gates and bars. Then Saul called all the people together for war.

Go down to Calah to besiege David and his men. When David knew that Saul plotted evil against him, he said to Abiathar the priest, Bring the ephod here. Then David said, O Lord God of Israel, your servant has certainly heard that Saul seeks to come to Calah to destroy the city for my sake. Will the men of Calah deliver me into his hand? Will Saul come down as your servant has heard? O Lord God of Israel, I pray, tell your servant. And the Lord said, He will come down.

Then David said, Will the men of Calah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the Lord said, They will deliver you. So David and his men, about 600, arose and departed from Calah and went wherever they could go.

[2 : 31] Then it was told Saul that David had escaped from Calah, so he halted the expedition. And David stayed in the strongholds in the wilderness and remained in the mountains of the wilderness of Ziph.

Saul sought him every day, but God did not deliver him into his hand. So David saw that Saul had come out to seek his life, and David was in the wilderness of Ziph in a forest.

Then Jonathan, Saul's son, arose and went to David in the woods and strengthened his hand in God. And he said to him, Do not fear, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find you.

You shall be king over Israel, and I shall be next to you. Even my father Saul knows that. So the two of them made a covenant before the Lord, and David stayed in the woods, and Jonathan went to his own house.

Then the Ziphites came up to Saul at Gibeah, saying, Is David not hiding with us in the strongholds in the woods, in the hill of Makalah, which is on the south of Jeshimon?

[3 : 38] Now therefore, O king, come down according to all the desire of your soul to come down, and our part shall be to deliver him into the king's hand. And Saul said, Blessed are you of the Lord, for you have compassion on me.

Please go and find out for sure, and see the place where his hideout is, and who has seen him there. For I am told he is very crafty.

See therefore, and take knowledge of all the lurking places where he hides, and come back to me with certainty, and I will go with you. And it shall be, if he is in the land, that I will search for him throughout all the clans of Judah.

So they arose, and went to Ziph before Saul. But David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon, in the plain on the south of Jeshimon.

When Saul and his men went to seek him, they told David, therefore, he went back, he went down to the rock, and stayed in the wilderness of Maon. And when Saul heard that, he pursued David in the wilderness of Maon.

[4 : 46] Then Saul went on his side of the mountain, and David and his men went on the other side of the mountain. So David made haste to get away from Saul, and Saul and his men were encircling David, and his men to take them.

But a messenger came to Saul, saying, Hurry, and come, for the Philistines have invaded the land. Therefore Saul returned from pursuing David, and went against the Philistines.

So they called that place the rock of escape. Then David went up from there, and dwelt in the strongholds at En Gedi. The word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God. Please be seated. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of the Lord, every last word, endures forever.

Let's pray. Oh Lord, we thank you for how you have acted with such power throughout redemptive history.

[5 : 58] We thank you for how you haven't let your actions go forgotten by your people. You've recorded them, and you've poured out your spirit to interpret your word.

We thank you, Lord, how every part of the Bible testifies of your redemption ultimately in Jesus Christ. We pray that by your spirit, you'll help us to see who you are, and what a wonderful, trustworthy, sovereign Savior you are, Lord.

Please make this so clear to your people, and we trust that you'll apply your truth to our lives the way that each one needs it. In this moment, we ask, Lord. Amen. Amen. Well, our congregation has experienced difficult losses this week.

There's intense stress in many homes. There are unexplainable frustrations that we can feel stuck in, at least for a while.

Not one of us can fully understand why things happen the way they do. No one can make complete sense out of those hardest experiences that each one of us have to go through at different points in our lives.

[7 : 22] And this leaves us with two options. It has to be one or the other. The first option seems to be the path of Saul. We can attempt to compensate for our smallness and our weakness by trying to control what is not ours to control.

Isn't that what Saul's doing? Or number two, with the Holy Spirit as our teacher, this seems to be what he's doing for David, we slowly learn to trust in God's complete, sovereign power and total providence over every aspect of our lives.

1 Samuel 23 is a wonderful illustration of this, isn't it? The theme of this whole chapter is captured in verse 14.

Would you look at that? Look at the second part of verse 14. We read that Saul, the wicked king Saul, who's trying to control everything and unwilling to let God put who he wants on the throne over Israel, Saul sought David every day, but God did not deliver him into his hand.

Picture being Saul, what should we do today? Let's do what we did yesterday. Let's try to capture David. That's all he can obsess about. And then David, on the other hand, doesn't even have that luxury.

[8 : 49] I don't get to pick what I want to do today. I know what I'm doing. I'm running away from Saul. Every day. But verse 14 interprets for us all that's going on in this chapter.

God did not deliver him over. David was preserved. David escaped. David was even perhaps crafty. But it was God delivering him, preserving him.

The second London Confession of Faith, chapter 5, paragraph 1, declares, professes what the Scripture says. God, the good creator of all things, in his infinite power and wisdom, does uphold, direct, dispose.

That's a word we've got to come back to. All things for his glory and our good. Amen? So Noah Webster's Dictionary, 1828, helped me with that word I didn't understand.

Dispose. I would think of a garbage disposal. You know, it's getting rid of something. But what the word dispose means, it's rich. It's to arrange things in order, to adapt them for a purpose, to bestow them upon others, to incline the mind toward a choice, conduct, guide, and authoritatively

determine a final outcome.

[10:16] It's the perfect word. God disposes. He sovereignly governs all things for the final outcome for which he intended them.

So brothers and sisters in the Lord, the question for us today, and it's really just an opportunity to marvel and praise God, it's how the Lord accomplishes his purposes.

It's how the Lord accomplishes his purposes. That's my message for you today. Let's see it first in verses 1 through 5. Observe in these verses how the Lord accomplishes his purposes through hearing and answering prayer.

The Lord accomplishes his purposes, and it's his pleasure to do this even by hearing and answering our prayers. Isn't that so good of him?

Look at verse 1. They told David, saying, Look, the Philistines, we haven't heard about them for a while because it's all been about Saul being the bad guy, chasing him down.

[11:22] The Philistines are fighting against Gath. Gath is a city of the Israelites, and they are robbing the threshing floors. Can you picture the Philistine army coming with all their iron weapons?

We know the Philistines also brought with them their own supply chain, so they brought livestock with them to feed their own army and troops. There's a lot of them, and they're just going around like it's taking candy from a baby, taking food off the threshing floors of the people of Israel in the south.

I wonder why the Philistines came up with this idea to attack now. You remember how the last chapter ended? David was among the Philistines, right? But he was acting crazy, and he wasn't with Saul anymore.

And why is David on the run, not in Israel, acting crazy over here in our country, in Gath? That means a few things here. That means David is the one who God has worked mightily through. We keep getting chased out and beaten by God through David, but remember how easy it was when it was Saul? Look at David now. It's just Saul over there. God doesn't have a pattern of helping that king.

[12:37] Let's go back. Let's take over. Verse 2. Notice what David does. Saul's making his own decisions, and two times now, even before the ephod of Abiathar, which we'll talk about, that's not even with him yet.

But look in verse 2. David inquired of the Lord. And then look again at verse 3. David inquired of the Lord once again. This is the wonderful point of application briefly.

What do we do, Lord? What would you have us do? Remember, the Lord will accomplish his purposes, and it's God's pleasure to do that through hearing and answering our prayers.

And this attack by the Philistines stirred this up in David, his servant. This is part of his preparation as a man in submission to God. Think of how our Lord Jesus, according to his human nature, was a man of prayer.

He needed to be. Mark 1.35. Jesus got up a long while before daylight, and he went out and departed to a solitary place, and there he prayed.

[13:51] Before big decisions in planting his church, our Lord Jesus, before calling the disciples in Luke 6.12, he went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

Our Lord knew his dependence on God, and how it's God's pleasure to accomplish his purpose through hearing and answering prayer. We even know that Jesus had a favorite place of prayer, at least one.

He went there so often that Judas knew that's where he would be. Luke 22.41 tells us, Jesus withdrew from the disciples about a stone's throw, and he knelt down and prayed, saying, Father, if it is your will, yet not my will but yours be done.

And being in agony, he prayed even more earnestly. The Lord will accomplish his will, his purposes in your life and in mine.

And one of the ways he's pleased to do that is by us praying to him, telling him what's hard, agonizing, even staying up all night praying, as I know some of you have in the last few weeks.

[15:04] Ephesians 6.18 encourages us, as Christians, as a church, we need to be people who are praying always, with all prayer and supplication, in the spirit, being watchful to this end, with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.

Colossians 4.2, continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it, and with thanksgiving. So when David inquired of the Lord, shall I go and attack the Philistines?

Verse 2, the Lord said to David, we don't know how, we're not given that detail. It's in prayer. It's without the help of the priest. He knew to go and attack the Philistines, and save this city, that has walls and gates, called Calah.

Verse 3, but David's men said to him, look, we're afraid here in Judah. Remember how they were in the stronghold, but God sent them back into the land of Judah, into the forest, and we didn't really know why.

We're afraid. We're afraid. How much more if we actually go on the offensive now? Go to Calah, and attack the Philistine armies. So David inquired of the Lord once again in verse 4.

[16:17] And the Lord answered him again. The Lord said, arise, go to Calah, for I will deliver the Philistines into your hand.

It's not David winning the battle. It's not his 600 men going to win it. It's the Lord delivering the Philistines one more time into his hand. So David and his men went to Calah and fought with the Philistines, struck them with a mighty blow by the power of the Lord we know, and took away their livestock while they were at it.

I'm sure they had a great barbecue that night. These 600 men in hiding. Notice the livestock is referring to the Philistines' livestock. And so David, by God's power, saved the inhabitants of Calah. because the Lord accomplished his purpose through hearing and answering David's prayer. The Lord hears your prayer, and the Lord loves to answer our prayer when it's in the mind of Christ, when it's according to his will, when it's for his glory.

Well, the second way in which the Lord accomplishes his purpose is it really builds right off of what just happened. It's even through selfishness, betrayal, and cruelty of men, the Lord still accomplishes his purposes.

[17:51] We see this over and over in Scripture, don't we? Men are evil. Men do bad things, intending harm, and the Lord still somehow uses it to accomplish his ultimate purpose.

So our second point is this, that even through the selfishness, betrayal, and cruelty of men, the Lord accomplishes his purposes. Verse 6 reads, Now it happened when Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech, fled to David at Calah, that he went down with an ephod in his hand.

The ephod in his hand is what the priest would put on over their linen garments. We don't know a lot about this, but there was something called the Urim, I always say it wrong, Urim and Thunim, and it was a binary way of determining God's will.

Like a God-directed, Holy Spirit-governed, you know, disposed way of telling yes or no to an answer. And so the priest brings that along, and remember, Saul had left himself without any way of seeking the will of God.

He killed all the other priests. There's one priest left. And even said, it even made the connection with the language, all those priests that Saul killed were the ones wearing an ephod. They're all dead now.

[19:08] How can Saul seek the will of the Lord in the ways that God has given them? There's one who can seek the will of the Lord, and it's David, because the priest is with him. In verse 7, we read this, Saul was told that David had gone to Cala.

So here are spies everywhere, and the word gets back to Saul. So Saul said, God has delivered him into my hand, for he has shut himself in by entering a town that has gates and bars.

Remember on the Psalms where David compares himself to a caged bird? This might be the inspiration for that feeling. In verse 8, Then Saul called all the people together for war to go down to Cala and besiege David and his men.

To besiege a town is to take your vast army and surround it on all sides, cut off their water supply, cut off their access to food, and then just wait and let them starve and become weak and desperate so that the people inside that are besieged will send a representative out who will make a negotiation and settle for very unfavorable terms.

And Saul will now dominate all of them. And so of course the people of Cala know this is coming. They will likely all die or become enslaved to Saul and have to pay him taxes for the rest of their life at an even higher rate.

[20:29] Verse 9, When David knew that Saul plotted evil against him, he said to Abiathar the priest, Bring the ephod here. One commentator from a long time ago observed, No sooner was the ephod brought to David than he made use of it.

We have the Bible in our hands. Let us make use of it. Let's encourage one another. You're surrounded by believers who trust the Word of God as His breathed out will of God. We know His will. And to encourage one another, to give everybody else a visual, lift up your Bible so everybody can see these are people of the book. And we turn to the Word of God. We have it in hand and we make use of it to know the Lord's will. Verse 10, David said, O Lord God of Israel, your servant has certainly heard that Saul seeks to come to Cala to destroy the city for my sake.

Remember, he already was feeling in the previous chapter, all the priests died for my sake. This was my fault. I can't have even more blood on my hands. Verse 11, Will the men of Cala deliver me into Saul's hand?

[21 : 48] Now, put your finger right there in the middle of verse 11, but look back at verse 5. Remember what it says in verse 5? David saved saved the inhabitants of Cala.

These are the exact same people he just saved by God's power. And so he, you've got to double check this one with the Lord. Will Saul come down as your servant has said?

O Lord God of Israel, I pray tell your servant. Verse 11, the Lord said he will come down. Verse 12, David said, Will the men of Cala deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul?

Rather than their whole city being besieged, just take them. That's who you want. Leave us alone. The Lord said they will deliver you. Verse 13, So David and his men about 600 arose and departed from Cala and went wherever they could go.

600 men on the height of a great victory enjoying a great barbecue now going.

[22 : 59] Doesn't even say where they went. They just scattered. They went wherever they could go, probably taking a little bit of livestock with them each. And then it was told Saul that David had escaped from Cala so he halted the expedition.

We have to see a shadow here of the great anointed king that was to come. The one who came for the purpose of delivering these people that are helpless from the real enemy, the Philistines. Their deliverer now sent away from them outside the city, driven away by the very people he just came to save.

But the Lord through the selfishness, betrayal, and cruelty of men, the Lord still accomplishes his purposes.

And he did this through the Lord Jesus Christ. You and I are the betrayers. We are enemies of God. You and I have every seed known to man, as Robert Murray Mishane said, is in our heart.

[24 : 16] We're capable of any cruelty. Left to ourselves, we are the most selfish people. And yet, we're the ones the Lord Jesus came to save.

He suffered outside the city gate. His disciples were scattered. That same imagery, isn't it? They went wherever they could go. And yet, our Lord did this to accomplish his purpose, to show that our salvation is not anything we have done, nothing we contribute, but it's all of his grace.

Amen? Number three, when it seems impossible for God to accomplish his purposes, he reminds you of his presence.

When it seems impossible for God to accomplish his purposes, he reminds you the very best comfort we could have, his presence with us.

Remember, David's men are scattered. We don't know how much time passes. The very people in Judah, the city he delivered by God's power, betrayed him.

[25 : 25] Where can I go? How is God ever going to keep his promise and establish a kingdom through me like he said? I don't even want it anymore. He can almost hear him saying. In verse 14, we pick up again.

David stayed in strongholds in the wilderness and remained in the mountains in the wilderness of Ziph. The focus here in these verses is to a lot of geography, topography, and it's probably because they came to know these places very intimately.

This was their new home now. From what I researched about the wilderness of Ziph, Ziph was the name of the city. It's in the hill country of Judah. The city sat on a high ridge overlooking the Judean wilderness to the east.

The limestone geology of this area is honeycombed with caves, and these served as natural bunkers where David's men could hide in total darkness while monitoring Saul's movements in the bright valley below.

Remember, Saul sought David every day, verse 14, but God did not deliver him into his hand. Verse 15, so David saw that Saul had come out to seek his life.

[26 : 41] Saul seeking his life. One of the Psalms inspired during this time was Psalm 63, 9, which mirrors that phrasing exactly. In that Psalm, David wrote, those who seek my life to destroy it.

shall go into the lower parts of the earth. For eternity, they will lose. Verse 15, David was in the wilderness of Ziph in a forest.

This forest provided that coverage and camouflage for his 600 men, making it even more difficult for Saul's men to spot them. In this wilderness, Psalm 63, verse 1, David cried out.

It gives us an insight into what he and his men might have been experiencing. My soul thirsts for you. My flesh longs for you in a dry and thirsty land.

And look at how the Lord answers David's prayer from the wilderness, crying out. Verse 16, Then, Jonathan.

[27 : 53] The Lord stirred his heart in that moment when David needed the encouragement.

Jonathan, Saul's son, arose and went to David in the woods and strengthened David's hand, how?

In God. That's the type of Christian friend we need to be for one another. And that's the type of Christian friend no Christian can do without. Someone who the Lord will stir their heart.

They'll come visit you or call you or text you and they will strengthen your hand in God. The only source of strength. Verse 17, Jonathan said to David, Do not fear for the hand of Saul my father shall not find you.

You shall be king over Israel and I shall be next to you. Even my father Saul knows that. I don't think Jonathan is telling the future here serving as a prophet.

I think the Lord has shown Jonathan the promised anointed one, the redemption of God's people, the deliverer, the shadow of Christ is David. And that grace ministered to Jonathan so much.

[29 : 10] He said, I'm by your side. I'm with what God is doing. Jonathan didn't know he would die in war. He would never be by David's side as king.

But his heart was with David. And it's true, the Lord has made a promise and Jonathan is reminding David, trust God's promise. He will establish his kingdom.

Do not fear man. Psalm 54 is another one that God breathed out through David with this context.

David cries out in verse 4, Behold, God is my helper.

The Lord is with those who uphold my life. It's Jonathan here propping him up, upholding his life and he takes it as a ministry of the Lord. The Lord is with Jonathan serving me this way.

It's the presence of the Lord with me through Jonathan. I will freely sacrifice to you and praise your name, O Lord, for it is good.

[30 : 17] And look at exactly what they do in verse 18. The two of them made a covenant before the Lord. they renew this pledge to show God's covenant faithfulness one to another in the presence of God.

I will freely sacrifice to you, O Lord. I will praise your name, O Lord, for it is good. They worship God together. Verse 18, So the two of them made this covenant but then David stayed in the woods and Jonathan went to his own house.

And this is where the scene picks up. It's back in Gibeah, the land of the Benjamites, not in Judah where David's from. And another twist in our story happens.

In verse 19, then the Ziphites, the people of Ziph, also from Judah, go all the way up to Saul at Gibeah to the land of Benjamin.

They're going out of their way to tell Saul where their fellow man from Judah is hiding. Is David not hiding with us in the strongholds in the woods? This is betrayal once again now.

[31 : 37] He just got betrayed by those he delivered by God's power and now he's being betrayed again by his fellow Judeans. And they say to Saul, come king, come down according to all the desire of your soul.

Instead of seeking the will of the Lord, it's man seeking to do whatever he thinks is right. Follow your own soul, Saul, and our part shall be to deliver him into the king's hand.

In Psalm 54, the superscription says it's a contemplation of David when the Ziphites went and said to Saul, is David not hiding with us?

David cried out, save me, O God, by your name, vindicate me by your strength. Hear my prayer, O God, give ear to the words of my mouth, for strangers have risen up against me.

These people of Ziph, his fellow tribesmen, he calls strangers. Oppressors. Oppressors have sought after my life. Saul and the army of Israel are the oppressors.

[32 : 46] They are the Egyptians. They are the Philistines. His countrymen and former brothers in battle are his oppressors. And why is it they have not set God before them?

The very thing Jonathan did. Jonathan came close and set God before David one more time. And Saul and his army and these people of Ziph have forgotten God.

And David says, they will receive justice from God. He will repay my enemies for their evil. Cut them off in your truth. For he has delivered me out of all my troubles.

My eye has seen its desire upon my enemies. They have not set God before them. They have not known the joy of being in God's presence in the wilderness.

like he and Jonathan just enjoyed. Our confession of faith says, God providentially superintends all creatures and things from the greatest even to the least by his most wise and holy providence to the end for which they were created.

[34 : 03] And God reminds us he does this because that's who he is. And when it seems impossible for God to accomplish his purposes, he is so kind to always remind you and me just like he did David that his presence is with us.

And that's enough. That's all we need. Well, the fourth and final observation for today is that looking back on God's providence, we will see if not in this life than in the life to come, we will see how God always accomplishes his purposes.

And he gives us these little moments to pause and look back and point out the ways in which he was superintending all things for his glory. We need to pause and praise him and celebrate his faithfulness.

Looking back on God's providence, we will see how he always accomplishes his purposes. Verse 21, Saul said, Blessed are you of the Lord for you have compassion on me.

He's buttering up the Ziphites that betrayed David. Please go and find out where he is. And then look at verse 24, So they, these men of Ziph, arose and went to Ziph before Saul.

[35 : 19] The men who were there really helping David and his men to stay in hiding are now coming back as spies for Saul. Because Ziph was a city of Judah, according to Joshua, 15, 24.

David likely expected protection from these men, but instead, they used their intimate knowledge of these strongholds to track David's hiding places and report them to Saul.

The one way in which he had an Achilles heel he could be trapped was if the locals would tattle on him. And sure enough, it's exposed. David and his men were in the wilderness.

Verse 25, we read that Saul and his men went out to seek him because the Ziphites had told them where they could find him. And there's no way that Saul and all the army of Israel that he summoned to go help him, there's no way these 600 men with the help of the Ziphites to aid Saul, they can get away.

this wilderness is described as barren, chalky hills in the northeastern Judean desert that overlook the Dead Sea.

[36 : 31] Not a lot of wildlife here. If you've been to the, I think it's called the paint caves or something like that in the southeast of Colorado, you can see this.

It's barren. It's like a desert, but then it drops down into these ravines, these little canyons, and all kinds of little places to walk in and out where the rock has washed away. And they tried to keep their high ground so they could see Saul and his approaching army.

We read in verse 25, when Saul and his men went to seek him, they told David, and therefore he went down to the rock and stayed in the wilderness. And when Saul heard that, he pursued David into this wilderness.

And then Saul went on one side of the mountain and David and his men went on the other side.

And don't picture just a sloping hill with grass. I mean, picture like rocky terrain.

Might have been a steep wadi or a ravine on one side and Saul on the other. Because the terrain was fractured, some think that Saul and his men could even see where David was, but they couldn't get to him quickly of all the climbing you had to do.

[37 : 41] So David made haste to get away from Saul, for Saul and his men were encircling David and his men to take them. He really seems trapped now. He's been found out.

And there's way too many and even going back and forth around this mountain isn't enough.

They're coming encircling on both sides. And then in verse 27, look what happens.

A messenger came to Saul. God's timing and providence is so perfect. And he said, hurry and come for the Philistines have invaded the land.

Remember how verse 1 of this chapter started? The Philistines were invading the land. And this is how it ends. And that's what God uses to spare his anointed one.

Verse 28, therefore Saul returned from pursuing David and went against the Philistines, the real enemy. Matthew Henry had this wonderful observation.

[38 : 46] Now we find why the prophet Gad in the previous chapter, remember, gave David this divine direction and ordered David to go into the land of Judah, into the woods of Judah.

And the men said, no, it's more dangerous there. Now we find out why God was doing that in hindsight. It was so that since Saul neglected the public safety of Israel, God would still take care of his people, notwithstanding the ill treatment that was given him for he must render good for evil and therein be a type of him who not only ventured his life but laid down his life for those who were his enemies.

God was overseeing the salvation of all Israel. Saul wasn't using the army of Israel to fight off the Philistines. It was David and his men that went and did it. And God used David as a bait to bring Saul and his armies to Judah where the Philistines were going to invade.

And here now we have a full army and God turns them to fight off the Philistines. See how the king has no power. It's God who steers the heart of the king by his sovereign decree.

And they called that place the rock of escape. Our Lord Jesus Christ super intends everything good for his people in the same way.

[40 : 15] 1 Corinthians 10, 13 reminds us no temptation must overtake you. God is faithful. He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able but with the temptation will also make way of escape that you may be able to bear it.

There may be times in life where the temptation is so great the suffering the despair is so great and it feels like being encircled on all sides and maybe betrayed and just stuck like there's no hope for me on my own.

And God promises he will always make a way of escape. He will always spare and protect and preserve for his ultimate good so that we do not stumble and fall into sin.

And God gets all the glory for sparing us in that. We read in verse 29 then David went up from there and dwelt in the strongholds of En Gedi.

David was in these rocks these strongholds but more importantly he was in God's hand. God had proved that over and over. Our Lord Jesus Christ does the same for his church.

[41 : 27] He proves that we can trust God. We see the infinite wisdom of God in full display on the cross of Jesus Christ.

Our Lord Jesus on the cross he became the rock the cornerstone the foundation. Like the hymn says the rock of ages cleft struck broken open for me to have a hiding place in him so we can hide ourselves in Jesus.

He is the only solid rock the only refuge in him alone are we safe. From our confession one last time God sovereignly governs all that comes to pass according unto his infallible foreknowledge and the free immutable counsel of his own will to the praise of the glory of his wisdom power justice infinite goodness and mercy.

Brothers and sisters we need to trust God. We need to trust our loving sovereign Lord. We need to trust that he is arranging all things that happen in purposeful order.

He bestows to each whatever suits his pleasure which is for your good and for his glory. He inclines each mind toward the choice that serves his grand design.

[43 : 02] He is conducting guiding and he will authoritatively determine the final outcome. Amen. Trust the Lord.

He will accomplish all his purposes in your life and mine and in his church. All glory be to God. Let's pray. Oh Lord our faith is weak.

We believe but please help our unbelief help us to trust you fully Lord to know your presence with your people so that we will one day by the ministry of your spirit even if it's in glory be able to look back on your providence and see how you always accomplish your purposes.

You are always faithful. We must trust you always. Please help us to do this Lord by your power by Christ's active obedience being worked out in our lives by the powerful ministry of the Holy Spirit we pray.

Amen.